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## Introduction

### Overview

The Circulation Application is a custom software program that helps automate the way your newspaper provides and monitors customer service. By telephoning the application and pressing touch tone keys, subscribers can suspend delivery during vacations, register service errors, request replacement papers, and speak directly to agents. Callers can also listen to information about their accounts.

Two “out-calling” programs operate co-residently with the Circulation Application: The Delivery Confirmation Application follows up with subscribers who request replacement papers, while the New Subscriber Verification Application checks that new subscriptions have begun. Both dial and query subscribers automatically. Custom reports list responses.

The AT&T CONVERSANT system uses a “real-time” TCP/IP interface to your HP 3000 host to identify callers, capture account information, and update the host’s database of subscribers who have not yet begun receiving papers. Via a daily file transfer, the host downloads a new list of subscribers for the New Subscriber Verification Application to call.

At the CONVERSANT terminal, your System Administrator maintains a table of telephone extensions to use when transferring callers to agents. This table also contains a flag that governs when callers can request replacement papers. Settings in other tables dictate when agents are available, how the out-calling applications may dial subscribers, and more. Read Chapter 3, “Administration,” for information about changing these settings yourself through Script Builder, AT&T’s application development tool.

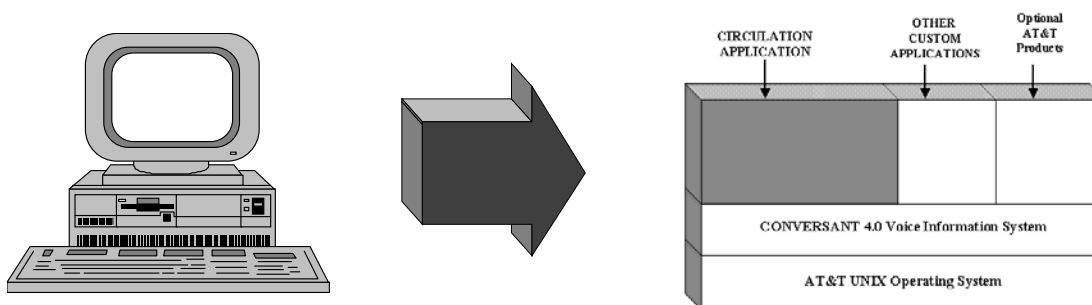


Figure Chapter 1 .1

Figure 1.1 illustrates the relationship between your applications and the standard CONVERSANT Voice Information System software that drives voice processing. All software is based on AT&T's UNIX operating system. Because UNIX is a multi-user, multi-tasking operating system, you can assign different applications to channels and even administer applications while the system is answering calls.

## **Supported Hardware/Software**

This application operates on AT&T's CONVERSANT Voice Processing Platform. It is supported on the following configuration:

### CONVERSANT VIS Hardware

- CONVERSANT MAP/100 processor
- One or more IVP6 Boards
- Ethernet Card

### CONVERSANT VIS Software

- CONVERSANT software, version 4.0
- UNIX System V Release 3.2.3
- Oracle DBMS 6.0.30

## *The Call Flow*

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This chapter contains the call flow or basic “blueprint” for your custom Circulation and Out-Calling applications. Consult the call flow for information about:

- What callers hear
- How the Circulation Application interacts with callers and the HP host
- How the Delivery Confirmation and New Subscription Verification Applications work co-residently with the Circulation Application to verify that services have been provided
- How to record speech for callers to hear when they first dial the Circulation Application

### **The Circulation Application**

The Circulation Application greets each caller with an introductory message, if one exists. Your System Administrator can update this message anytime by dialing the application and entering \*8 followed by a password.

When the host is available, the system follows this greeting with a menu of options. Callers with touch tone phones can choose to start a subscription, report a delivery problem, temporarily suspend delivery, hear account information, or speak with an agent. Callers with rotary phones wait for an agent. At times when the host is scheduled to be unavailable, the system advises callers when to call back, and then it disconnects.

To start subscriptions, callers speak to agents. However, callers can report problems, suspend delivery, and hear account information without an agent’s help after they identify themselves by entering their telephone number and house number.

**To report a delivery problem** during normal delivery hours, callers identify the paper to which they subscribe and the nature of the problem. Callers before normal delivery hours hear the hours to expect delivery and then return to the main menu.

If special re-delivery hours are in effect, callers can choose to have their paper re-delivered or their account credited. Callers can also choose to speak with an agent. After special re-delivery hours, callers can choose only to receive a credit or speak with a representative.

**NOTE:** Refer to your Product Specification for more information about “host available hours,” “delivery hours,” “re-delivery hours” and “agent available hours.” Refer to Chapter 3, “Administration” for information about which settings you can change yourself.

**To suspend delivery**, callers enter a date to stop and a date to restart delivery. If the stop date is 2 days or more after the current date and the restart date is between 3 and 60 days past the stop date, the system accepts their request and offers to donate their papers to the Newspapers in Education program. If callers decline this offer, the system offers to save their papers and deliver them following their return.

Callers who choose **account information** hear the type of subscription service they have, their account's balance, the date through which their service is paid, and the amount of their last payment.

After every transaction, callers can return to the main menu, handle other business with the newspaper (with a Business Services Agent), or end the call.

## **The Out-Calling Applications**

Two "out-calling" applications automatically call subscribers to determine if they have received the proper services.

The Re-delivery Confirmation Application places follow up calls to subscribers who request replacement papers. Subscribers press 1 if their paper was properly re-delivered; otherwise, they press "2." The application immediately sends information about subscribers who have not yet received replacement papers to the host. The Re-delivery Confirmation Status Report described in Chapter 4 lists their responses.

Similarly, the New Subscription Verification Application dials new subscribers and prompts them to press "1" if their service has started, "2" if they have not yet received a paper, or "3" if they would prefer to speak with a representative. The application immediately sends information about subscribers who have not yet received papers to the host. The New Subscriber Verification Status Report described in Chapter 4 lists all responses including requests to speak with an agent made when agents were unavailable.

These applications can continue to dial a number until the called party answers and presses a touch tone in response. Currently, the New Subscription Verification Application stops after three attempts; the Re-delivery Confirmation Application stops after two.

**NOTE:** Both applications dial "9" to secure outside phone lines through your PBX. Then, for long distance numbers, they dial "1," the area code, and the seven digit phone number. For local calls, they dial only the seven-digit phone number. The system comes configured to use channels 19 through 24 for out-calling, but you can assign other channels instead. The out-calling applications will use a channel only when it is not being used by the Circulation Application to respond to a call.